

IN THE DRAWINGS

The attached two sheets of drawings include a change in the page number of a previously filed replacement sheet and a new figure. The replacement sheet, which includes FIGS. 1-6, replaces the previously substituted sheet including FIGS. 1-6. No changes have been made to the replacement sheet with the exception of a minor pagination correction in view of the newly submitted FIG. 7. The new sheet includes new FIG. 7.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet (1); New Sheet (1)

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this Application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

This Amendment is in response to the Final Office Action mailed on July 21, 2005.

Claims 1-3 and 5-20 are pending in the Application, Claims 1-3, 7, and 15-17 stand rejected, Claims 8-14 and 18-20 have been allowed, and Claims 4-6 have been objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims, but would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. The indication of allowance of Claims 8-14 and 18-20 and allowable subject matter is noted with appreciation. Claims 1-3, 5, 6, and 15-17 are amended and Claim 4 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer by the present Amendment.

In view of the allowable subject matter of Claims 4-6, Claim 1 has been amended to recite the subject matter of Claim 4, which is now canceled, and Claim 5 has been rewritten in independent form, incorporating the subject matter of Claim 1. Claims 2 and 3 have been amended for consistency with the changes to Claim 1. As such, Claims 1-3 and 5-7 are believed to be in condition for allowance.

Summarizing the outstanding Final Office Action, the specification and the drawings were objected to because of informalities; Claims 15-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph; Claims 1, 2, and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fukuno (U.S. Patent No. 6,089,822) in view of North et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,609,466, hereinafter “North”); and Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fukuno and North, and further in view of Soechting et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,761,529, hereinafter “Soechting”).

In response to the objection to Applicants' specification, Applicants have submitted an amendment correcting the informality noted by the Examiner. Reconsideration of the same is respectfully requested.

In response to the objection to Applicants' drawings under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a), Applicants have submitted a new drawing sheet containing new FIG. 7 and a replacement sheet correcting the pagination of the previously replaced sheet containing FIGS. 1-6. New FIG. 7 is similar to FIG. 2, but with the elliptical groove illustrated as recited in Claim 19 and described in Applicants' specification. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added to the above-referenced application by the replacement and the new drawings submitted. In addition, paragraphs in the specification have been amended to refer to the new figure and to provide antecedent basis for the subject matter of Claim 11, as requested by the Examiner. Entry of the new FIG. 7 and the amendments to Applicants' specification is respectfully requested.

In response to the outstanding rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, Applicants have amended Claims 15-17, as requested by the Examiner, thus overcoming the same, and respectfully request its withdrawal. It is believed that all pending claims are definite and no further rejection on that basis is anticipated. If, however, the Examiner disagrees, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned who will be happy to work with the Examiner in a joint effort to derive mutually acceptable language.

In view of the present amendment, the allowed claims, and the allowable subject matter of Claims 4-6, Applicants respectfully submit that the above-summarized rejections are now moot. Their withdrawal is respectfully requested.

The present amendment is submitted in accordance with the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §1.116, which after a Final Rejection permits entry of amendments placing the

claims in condition for allowance or in better form for consideration on appeal.¹ As the present amendment simply changes the pending claims based on allowable subject matter and is believed to overcome the outstanding rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 112, 102, and 103, the present amendment places the application in condition for allowance. It is therefore respectfully requested that 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 be liberally construed, and that the present amendment be entered.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal Allowance. A Notice of Allowance for Claims 1-3 and 5-20 is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicants' undersigned representatives at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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¹ See, for example, MPEP §714.12.